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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000465

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: CIVILIAN LEADERS COMMENT ON GROWING MILITARY
FACTIONALISM

Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

11. (S) SUMMARY. According to key civilian leaders, growing factionalism within the military is cause for concern. Younger contacts seem to think that an implosion is imminent while older contacts were less urgent, but worried. Comments suggest that there are several factions within the military, possible ethnic divisions between the Malinkes and the Forestiers, and that Pivi is in the middle of it all. One contact also talked about a potential plot to overthrow Dadis. Growing discord within the military is one of several potentially destabilizing flashpoints in what remains a highly volatile political situation. END SUMMARY.

12. (S) During the week of August 3, A/DCM met with several civilian contacts to explore concerns about growing factionalism within the Guinean military. Contacts included opposition political leaders Sidya Toure and Jean-Marie Dore, and youth leaders Dansa Kourouma and Mouctar Diallo (who also has his own political party).

FRUSTRATION AND DISORDER WITHIN THE CAMPS

13. (S) Youth leader Mouctar Diallo commented that the military as an institution lacks stability. "There is a lot of frustration within, and according to my military contact, they are on the verge of a massacre," Diallo said. He described how only one faction actually seized power, which means that only one group is reaping the "profits" of the coup. According to Diallo, other military personnel are increasingly dissatisfied with the situation. In addition, the complete lack of discipline and respect for senior officers undermines the authority of the institution.

14. (S) According to Diallo, there are at least three "clans" or factions that have emerged within the military: those that follow Minister of Defense Sekouba Konate, those that follow Dadis, and those that follow Claude Pivi, the Minister of Presidential Security. He claimed that there might be other groups, but that these are the most powerful.

15. (S) When asked about possible implications of a violent redistribution of power within the military, Diallo speculated that if another military leader stepped into the vacuum, the population would be willing to accept him as long as he were clearly committed to elections and the transition agenda. However, Diallo said that if someone like Pivi stepped in, the people "would immediately revolt." Diallo added that people may be willing to accept Defense Minister Konate as a replacement for Dadis.

ELECTIONS ARE THE ANSWER

16. (S) Opposition political leader Sidya Toure (UFR) echoed Diallo's concerns, commenting on the pervasive lack of discipline throughout the military. "There is a lot of disorder, lots of aggression," Sidya said. He added that the CNDD's grip on power is fragile, especially since no one really even knows who is part of the CNDD anymore. When asked about the risk of a military on military conflict, Sidya said he could not rule out the possibility given the increasing factionalism. He seemed to feel that as the transition period drags out, the potential for a military implosion increases, arguing "that is why we need to end this thing with elections." According to Sidya, many military personnel agree with him and are afraid that the situation will continue to deteriorate.

17. (S) Jean-Marie Dore, head of the UPG party and spokesperson for Les Forces Vives, said "there is a cleavage at the heart of the army...but it should not get in the way of elections." Dore also commented on growing factionalism, primarily tied to ethnicity, but felt that "everybody is out for themselves." He said the factions are "not high-level" with insignificant actors leading insignificant groups. "Ninety percent of the military want this problem resolved," Dore said. He blamed the factionalism and the disorder on the military's newest recruits, especially Claude Pivi's gang (the Minister of Presidential Security and leader of the May 2008 military mutiny). "Everyone is looking to be chief."

A COUP PLOT "IN THE WORKS"

CONAKRY 00000465 002 OF 002

18. (S) Citing a "very reliable source," Dansa Kourouma said that at least one faction is planning to overthrow Dadis and that a plan is already in the works. However, Dansa commented that his contact may have only passed the information in an attempt to gauge his reaction. When asked who might be planning to step in to replace Dadis, Dansa said he could not share the information, but that the person would not be a Forestier, is currently close to Dadis (a member of Dadis' recruitment class), and well educated. Dansa added that Sa Alphonse Toure, who was arrested in May on charges of conspiracy against the regime, called him in December to warn him of a potential coup. "I ignored him at the time, but it quickly came true, so I am careful now not to disregard information about a possible coup," Dansa said.

19. (S) According to Dansa, the military could "erupt" at anytime. He said that Pivi is actively recruiting and training new soldiers and that these new recruits are likely to be loyal only to Pivi. Dansa identified Pivi as head of one of the more troublesome "factions."

ETHNIC TENSIONS

110. (S) Dansa claimed that there is a growing tension between the Malinke and Forest ethnic groups within the military, which he linked to differences between Dadis/Pivi (Forest) and Defense Minister Konate (Malinke). Using an example to illustrate, Dansa described how when Konate traveled to Morocco for medical treatment, he left BATA (Presidential Guard) Commandant Conde and Issa Traore (the former head of the dissolved Bureau of Conflict) in charge of the Ministry of Defense. According to Dansa, Konate was worried that Pivi might try to interfere so he decided to leave two of his most trusted associates behind. Both of these men are Malinke.

COMMENT

¶11. (S) All four contacts independently agreed that growing factionalism within the military is cause for concern. However, they seemed to have varying senses of urgency about the problem. The youth leaders seemed to think that the situation could explode at any moment while the older, more seasoned political leaders seemed to think that it is something to watch, but not necessarily something to keep people up at night. Sensitive reporting in recent months has also pointed to significant internal discord within the military, including talk of a counter-coup to overthrow Dadis.

¶12. (S) Instability within the military is one factor within a complex group of factors contributing to Guinea's continued political fragility. Other elements include growing popular dissatisfaction with the current leadership, a lack of unified leadership in the civilian sector, a national economic crisis, continued delays to organize elections, and pervasive poverty. The military is a potential flashpoint for violence, but so are all of the other factors just mentioned. The bottom line is that Guinea is in a precarious position with an uncertain future. At the same time, discord within the military is particularly troubling because if it erupts into violence, it could pose a major setback to the entire transition process. As contacts indicate, it is something to keep an eye on. END COMMENT.
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